

SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SELF-DETERMINATION ACT
Chippewa National Forest Resource Advisory Committee Meeting
Project Proposal Meeting
June 19, 2014

RAC Members present:

Category A - Elmer Cone, Harold Goetzman, Brian Bignall, and Martin Jennings (called in)

Category B - Gene Larimore, Richard Downham, James Ballenthin, Wanda Hoyum, Stephen Wilds,

Category C - Michael Carroll, Catherine McLynn, Christina Bowstring

Chippewa NF : Darla Lenz (Forest Supervisor), Todd Tisler (RAC Coordinator)

Public Guests: Andy Arens, Itasca SWCS

Recorder: Melissa Rickers

The meeting was called to order at 9:36 a.m. by Catherine McLynn

Introductions: RAC members re-introduced themselves.

Quorum Clarification:

If vote, must have a quorum of 5 in each subcommittee. Consensus from 3 members in each category is needed in order for a project approval to proceed. Administrative actions may occur with the quorum of 9 needed to conduct a RAC meeting. A replacement member cannot vote unless accepting to be a proxy designated in writing by a member on the committee

Catherine reviewed with committee what was handed out and what each RAC member had.

Opening Statements – Darla Lenz

History of Secure Rural Schools Act

RAC Update – Todd Tisler

- **Status of RAC and budget.**
- **RAC Membership Status:** Todd discussed status and vacancies: Handed out recruitment letter - Members would like a list of who it was sent to so they can help follow up.
- **Reviewed Summary of the past projects approved by the RAC:** Committee would like to see monitoring results and a report with pictures. This could help build future partnerships. Forest is planning on doing signage at some of the projects that is a RAC funded project.

New project discussion and recommendations: (By Project Number)

1. IWLP Purple Loosestrife Control Partnership

Discussion:

- This has been a successful partnership.
- Has been successful in impacting Loosestrife.

- Their work could be used else where
- There is a decision to use herbicide on certain species and locations. There was consultation with Leech Lake and input from public. Decision has been in place for a couple years. Martin would like copy of decision.

RAC Decision/Recommendation - Fund \$10,000

2. Chippewa National Forest Campground Improvements – FS

Discussion:

- Endless ongoing list of improvements that are needed. There is a budget but allocations have been declining.
- Good place to show the public where RAC money is going. Good project that has public involvement and gets more kids in the woods.
- Camping is very important - public is most effected, local businesses, communities etc.
- Get townships involved to help.

RAC Decision/Recommendation: \$6,000

3. Chippewa National Forest Boat Access Repairs and Improvements – FS

Discussion:

- Same as Campgrounds, not enough funding.
- Trying to stay ahead of erosion
- This money would be used to upgrade as many docks as possible at the boat accesses. Safety issue.

RAC Decision/Recommendation – \$9,850

4. Ladyslipper Restoration – Ladyslipper Scenic Byway Board

Discussion:

Youth involved

- Lots of volunteers (Have they tracked number and hours would be interesting to know)
- Others stand behind this project has 2/3 other funding sources.
- Very visible project
- Very organized group; have done a lot with a small amount of money
- Percent was used for transplanting and some for the boardwalk
- Has been successful
- Project has been difficult. Monitoring - will start this next year since plants were just transplanted
- Ribbon Cutting June 28, RAC members invited

RAC Decision/Recommendation – \$9,850

5. Chippewa National Forest Campground Road Maintenance – FS

Discussion:

- Option 1 – 6500 would be used for Diamond Lake Road improvements which is at a boat access. Erosion control affecting road.
- Health and safety issue

RAC Decision/Recommendation – \$10,000

6. Island Lake Stabilization and Nutrient Reduction Project – Itasca SWCD

Andy Arens, Itasca SWCD Present

Discussion:

This is private land

- Excessive erosion
- Continuation of past approved project on Jesse Lake
- NEPA has to be done – Categorical Exclusion for water restoration type projects. Even on private land because using federal funds
- 50% cost share
- SWCD interested in these buffers. Due to keeping soil sediment out of lakes. Big environmental benefit.
- Replant native plants.
- Who is responsible for maintaining once done. Will they mow once done and not leaving buffers. It is ultimately up to land owner and will do checks for 10 years. If buffers aren't maintained then lose value. If we can get an entry it then becomes expectation and pressure from neighbor to neighbor and gets lake associations involved.
- Itasca should have an ordinance? Cass County has one.
- From Forest Service - lakes within NF combination ownership. We are a land owner and concerned about health of lakes and one effective way is to work with land owners. To keep it healthy. The difference that could be made on lake health is working together, within our boundaries.
- Problem is people and we need to change the culture. Problem is people. If we can impact land owners we can change people. It takes time and education. Supports buffer programs because we have to change culture and when it works it has a cascading affect.
- Public needs to be involved and the lake associations

RAC Decision/Recommendation – \$10,000

7. West Winnie Boat Launch Relocation Project

Discussion:

- Been an issue for very long time. Mike Carroll would like to see as a priority. Not a good access, needs work. People he represents want this done.
- This boat access could spread invasive species to Cass Lake chain of lakes.

- Proposed activity is to move launch close to mouth of Winnie. Closer for protection and maintenance.
- There will be very tight monitoring on this project.
- Have to dredge it every other year.
- Health and safety issue

RAC Decision/Recommendation: \$35,000

8. Pug Hole Lakes Road Project

Discussion:

- It is a reoccurring issue with erosion.
- Continuation from previous funding.
- Challenge cost share with Cass County.

RAC Decision/Recommendation – \$14,000

VOTE:

Resource Advisory Committee completed review and discussion of the project proposals under the Secure Rural Schools Act. Majority voted (G. Larimore – No) on Option 1 modified to fund eight projects and recommend the following distribution of the approximately \$104,000 available:

<u>2014 Recommended Projects</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Chippewa National Forest Boat Access Improvements	\$9,150
West Winnie Boat Launch Relocation Project	\$35,000
IWLP Purple Loosestrife Control Partnership	\$10,000
Lady Slipper Ecosystem Restoration Project	\$9,850
Chippewa National Forest Campground Improvements	\$6,000
Chippewa National Forest Campground Road and Spur Maintenance	\$10,000
Pughole Lakes Road Project (Cass County)	\$14,000
Island Lake Stabilization and Nutrient Reduction Project – Itasca SWCD	\$10,000
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$104,000</u>

Recommend any excess funds go toward the following projects:

- Chippewa National Forest Campground Road and Spur Maintenance
- Chippewa National Forest Campground Improvements

Catherine McLynn adjourned the meeting at 11:53